

Frequently Asked Questions

Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Program U.S. Department of Education

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Eligibility

Q1. I am in a combination baccalaureate/master's degree program. Am I eligible to apply for a Javits Fellowship?

A1. You are eligible when you enter a doctoral program in an eligible field of study.

Q2. I already have a master's degree and I have been working. Am I eligible to apply for a Javits fellowship to support my doctoral study?

A2. Yes, you are eligible to apply.

Q3. I already have a Ph.D. (or a terminal master's degree) but not in an eligible field of study. Am I eligible to apply if I am entering a doctoral program for the first time in an eligible field of study?

A3. Yes.

Q4. I had a Javits fellowship in past years, but I did not complete my Ph.D. before it ended. Am I eligible to apply for another fellowship?

A4. No.

Q5. Am I eligible if I am already enrolled in my first year of graduate school?

A5. Yes, you are eligible if at the time of application you have not completed your first year of graduate school and are pursuing the terminal degree awarded in one of the eligible fields of study.

Q6. Am I eligible to apply if I am currently in my first year of a two-year MFA program?

A6. Yes, you are eligible to apply.

Q7. The graduate program at my school only goes to the master's level, but not the Ph.D. Can I use the Javits Fellowship to get a master's degree at my school and transfer later to a Ph.D. granting program at another institution?

A7. Yes. There can be no interruption between completion of the master's degree and entrance into a Ph.D. program. At the time of application you must clearly indicate that you are pursuing a Ph.D.

Q8. Am I eligible if my school does not award the MFA but another terminal degree for my field?

A8. Yes. Students may be entering a program that awards a terminal degree at the master's level other than the MFA.

Q9. Is a Masters of Social Work an eligible field of study?

A9. No. The Javits Fellowship program does not support any degrees that lead to professional clinical practice.

Q10. Is clinical psychology an eligible field of study?

A10. No. The Javits Fellowship Program does not support degree programs that lead to professional clinical practice.

Financial Need

Q1. How is financial need determined in the Javits Fellowship Program?

A1. By law, financial need is determined using Part F of Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. Each applicant must submit a Free Application for Student Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and receive the resulting Estimated Family Contribution (EFC). Your institution will later use the EFC in calculating your stipend. For the purpose of making new fellowship awards, the Department of Education considers a student as eligible whose EFC that is less than the maximum fellowship.

Q2. Is my parent's financial information included in calculating my EFC?

A2. No. Students entering graduate school are automatically considered independent in the federal student aid processing system.

Q3. I am currently receiving financial aid in the form of loans. Payment on the loans is not overdue. Am I eligible to apply for the Javits Fellowship?

A3. Yes, you are eligible to apply. The Javits Fellowship application package includes a certification that you are not in default on federal student loans.

Q4. The FAFSA requires financial information from the just-ended tax year for which I will not receive my W-2 until after January 31. What should I do about filing the FAFSA by the January 31 deadline?

A4. The FAFSA allows for students to estimate their income and taxes. Use the previous years tax figures to gauge an estimate if you filed a tax return and had similar employment. If not, you can calculate income and taxes from pay stubs in order to make an estimate. A FAFSA MUST BE SUBMITTED BY JANUARY 31, even if the numbers have to be corrected later.

Application Preparation

Q1. Is there enough time before the application deadline date to take the GRE General Test?

A1. The GRE General Test is offered on-line Monday through Saturday throughout the year. The test is only available on-line. Scores cannot be printed from on-line testing. Students can

expect to receive test scores by mail 15-20 days after they take the test. See <http://www.gre.org>.

Q2. I haven't received my GRE scores/transcripts/letters of recommendation yet, and the deadline date is fast approaching. What should I do?

A2. The application instructions clearly state that all required materials must be included in your application package. The applicant is responsible for collecting the required information in time for the deadline.

Q3. Can I ask the Educational Testing Service to send my GRE scores directly to the Department of Education?

A3. No. We cannot accept or insert extraneous materials into your application package.

Q4. The professor that I wanted for a letter of recommendation is not available. Can the professor send the letter directly to the Department of Education?

A4. No. We cannot accept or insert extraneous materials into your application package.

Q5. Must the Department of Education receive the application by the deadline date?

A5. The application must be postmarked by the deadline date.

Q6. Will I be penalized for sending my GRE tests scores if I am an Arts applicant?

A6. No, you will not be penalized, but the GRE scores cannot be used in evaluating you because they are not one of the selection/evaluation criteria.

Q7. Can I send my supporting arts materials in formats other than those described in the application (e.g., zip disk, URLs)?

A7. No.

Q8. Within the guidelines of the various types of supporting materials, must I submit only one type? For instance, may I submit ten slides in addition to a five-minute VHS tape?

A8. No. Please supply the medium that best demonstrates your talent or accomplishments.

Q9. What should I do if the office at my school that sends out letters of recommendation will not give the letters to me for inclusion in my application and insists on mailing them directly to you?

A9. We suggest showing your school the Javits Fellowship application instructions requiring the letters as part of the application package. You can also ask professors to give the letters of recommendation directly to you.

Q10. When are new fellowship awards announced?

A10. The Department of Education must announce new awards by March 1 of the academic year preceding the academic year for which the fellowship is awarded.

Q11. How are applicants notified of their status?

A11. Successful applicants typically are notified by telephone and later receive a letter containing further instructions. The Department of Education mails all other applicants a letter.

Q12. When will alternates be notified if they were selected for a fellowship?

A12. Alternates will be notified as soon as the Department of Education has determined that remaining funds are sufficient to fund additional fellowships.

Q13. I am an applicant for the Javits Fellowship. I was wondering if the fellowship could be used at an institution outside the U.S., in particular, a university in Canada. I did not see anything in the legislation that prohibited this, but I wanted to check.

A13. The fellowship must be used at an institution accredited by an agency recognized by the Secretary of Education. See definitions in regulations 650.4, and 650.30, "Where may fellows study?" Check with your institution to learn if it is accredited by a recognized agency.

Q14. Are GRE scores required of Creative Writing (MFA applicants in poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction)?

A14. Yes. Official GRE scores or copies of GRE scores are required of all the field code 102 or Creative Writing applicants who are pursuing the terminal degree in the field.

Questions from Fellows

Q1. How is the actual stipend calculated?

A1. Your school will calculate your financial need for a Javits stipend using the following formula: The maximum Javits stipend amount minus the Cost of Attendance (determined by your school) minus tuition and fees minus your Estimated Family Contribution (calculated from the FAFSA). The amount of a fellow's stipend cannot exceed his or her financial need.

Q2. Why is the cost of tuition and fees subtracted in determining a fellow's financial need?

A2. We do not include the cost of tuition and fees in a fellow's financial need because the fellowship provides an Institutional Allowance in lieu of tuition and fees. Institutions agree to accept the Institutional Allowance as a condition of the fellowship.

Q3. How is the stipend disbursed to fellows?

A3. See the Jacob K. Javits Fellowship Regulations, Section 650.43. Your school will set the disbursement schedule for your stipend. Stipend disbursement must be at least once every academic term.

Q4. Is the Javits Fellowship subject to Federal income tax?

A4. Yes, see IRS Publication 520, Scholarships and Fellowships. See <http://www.irs.gov>.

Q5. How do I renew my fellowship for next year?

A5. The Javits Coordinator at your school will submit a request on your behalf to the U.S. Department of Education prior to each year of your fellowship. Your school will request fellowship funds based on an annual filing/update of your FAFSA. You must submit the renewal information to your school upon request.

Q6. How does the Secretary approve an interruption of study?

A6. A student must fulfill the requirements for an interruption of study as described in the Javits Program Regulations, Section 650.35. The student must complete and submit a Request of Interruption of Study form to the Javits Coordinator at their institution. The institution must agree to the interruption and determine if the fellow is eligible to receive stipend payments during the interruption period.

Q7. How do I transfer my fellowship to another institution?

A7. The student must complete and submit a Request for Institutional Transfer form to the Javits Coordinator at their institution. The Javits Coordinator submits the form to the U.S. Department of Education. The Department of Education contacts the new institution to obtain an agreement to comply with the provisions of the fellowship. Upon receipt of a signed agreement, the Department of Education arranges for the transfer of funds to correspond with enrollment at the new institution.

Q8. How do I get approved for part-time work?

A8. The fellow must meet the conditions of Section 650.34 of the Javits Program Regulations in order to make the request. The student must complete and submit a Request for Part-Time Work form to the Javits Coordinator at their institution. The Javits Coordinator signs and submits the request to the U.S. Department of Education for approval. The Department of Education returns the approved form to the institution.

Q9. Must the student refund the fellowship if the student withdraws from school without completing their course of study?

A9. No.